

## HD 497 Lecture 3 – Developmental Issues

### Slide 1

[Slide title]

HD 300 Child Abuse & Neglect

[Slide content]

Unit 3

Developmental Effects of Abuse

[Audio]

Abuse affects children at every stage of development; however, the roots of abuse begin long before the child is ever conceived or born.

### Slide 2

[Slide title]

Developmental Trajectory of Abuse

[Slide content]

- Prior to conception of the child
  - Attitudes toward children and parenting
  - History of abuse
- Pregnancy
  - Unplanned pregnancy
  - Wrong reasons for conception
  - Attitudes toward pregnancy
  - Maternal substance abuse

[Audio]

So, if we look at the trajectory of abuse, abuse begin even before the conception of the child, that is, attitudes that the mother and the potential father have towards childbearing and also, attitudes towards children and parenting and whether or not, there has been a history of abuse in either the family of the mother or the father. If we look at pregnancy, unplanned pregnancy, the wrong reasons for conception – some girls get pregnant to keep their boyfriend or to get back at their parents, attitudes toward pregnancy – how the woman feels about the baby that is to come, how she feels about her body changing, and maternal substance abuse during pregnancy – this can affect the child during conception and all of the reasons listed above under pregnancy can predispose a woman to view her newborn baby negatively and that baby is at higher risk for abuse.

### Slide 3

[Slide title]

Developmental Trajectory of Abuse

**[Slide content]**

- Childbirth experience
- Bonding experience
- Expectations of the newborn
- Effect of newborn on parental lifestyle or personal expectations

**[Audio]**

The childbirth experience also affects whether or not a child is going to be abused. If the childbirth experience is a negative one, the mother may resent the child even though the baby has nothing to do with the labor and delivery. The baby is simply a passenger and the experience likely isn't very pleasant for the baby either, but often the mother will blame the baby for a long labor or a painful labor.

The bonding experience – in a hospital or a birthing center now, bonding is evaluated and recorded and if it appears that the mom is not bonding well with the infant, then the nurses or the social workers can evaluate the problem and assist her. It is not only important that the child bonds with the mother, it is really important that the mother and father bond with the child.

Expectations of the newborn – some new parents have no idea what to expect from a newborn. One mom in our maternity unit was holding her baby on her lap and was very upset because the baby was quote “really mad at me” and the baby was simply pulling faces, which was very normal for newborns.

The effect of a newborn on parental style or personal expectations because having a baby completely changes the parent's life. It becomes a 24/7 responsibility that may interfere with career plans and it certainly interferes with the amount of time parents can spend together. The number one complaint of new parents is fatigue and that affects job performance and relationship issues as well. Some of you may have yourself or have children who are in junior high school who have had to take home a doll that is almost like a baby and care for it 24 hours a day and it gives you a whole new perspective on what it is like to become a parent.

**Slide 4**

**[Slide title]**

Developmental Trajectory

Birth to 1 Year

**[Slide content]**

- Of all ages, most vulnerable to abuse
- Infants most at risk:
  - Pre-term infants
  - “Ugly” infants
  - “Wrong sex” infants
  - Infants who have health problems
  - Children born with disabilities
  - Infants with colic (#1 predictor of homicide)

**[Audio]**

If we move to the child who is a newborn to one year of age, of all ages infants are most vulnerable to abuse because they are completely dependent on their caregivers and they can't do anything to protect themselves and the infants especially at risk are:

- Pre-term infants – these infants require more time and attention than full-time newborns and they are also very much more expensive, they don't look like the cute newborns the parents expect, their skin is wrinkled, they have very little body fat and their faces are not doll-like and attractive and in fact, many of them look like a little old man.
- "Ugly" infants – now, not all newborns are cute, although most parents thank goodness consider them beautiful. Just an example, one of the babies born in our hospital had extremely large ears, when we took her cap off and the father saw what she looked like, he said, "Isn't she beautiful, she looks just like our other children," he took his cap off and he had the same ears. Other parents may have been appalled, but we were really glad that that baby was into a family where she would look like everyone else.
- The "wrong sex" infant – how many of you have heard parents wished that their child was a boy or a girl and they had the opposite?
- Infants who have health problems or disabilities also require more time and energy and monetary resources and this can create a great deal of stress and places these infants at higher risk for abuse.
- Infants with colic, infants who are crying constantly and in fact, this is the number one predictor of homicide in infants under a year of age. Infants who cry continuously cause stress and frustration in parents and often the parents get very little sleep. Usually these infants have tummy aches because they are not tolerating their breast milk or formula and it is very uncomfortable for them. Parents out of frustration may place something over the baby's mouth or nose and shake the baby, throw the baby, or strike the baby simply because they are so frustrated.

**Slide 5**

**[Slide title]**

Developmental Trajectory

Ages 1 to 4

**[Slide content]**

- Potty training (#1 predictor of homicide)
- Language development affected
- Attachment disorders become apparent
- Autonomy issues negatively affected
- Hyper-vigilance and "stilling" appear
- May see role reversal in these children

**[Audio]**

Moving to the next age group, children in ages 1 to 4. Potty training is the number one predictor of homicide in this age group of children. For children ages 2 to 3 potty training is the issue that frustrates many parents. Parents may think that children are deliberately soiling and wetting their